



## Operation Noble Eagle

At press time, more than 24,100 Army National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers had been called up to provide security at airports and other facilities around the country.

Repair of the Pentagon was ahead of schedule, and by the end of January more than 1,000 people had returned to work in the building. The portion damaged by the hijacked airliner will be opened for use by the one-year anniversary of the Sept. 11 attack.

On Feb. 6, the Pentagon reopened for school tours.

## Operation Enduring Freedom

On Jan. 8, a field hospital built by 10th Mountain Division soldiers, other U.S. organization and Jordanian special forces soldiers was opened to treat Afghan civilians in Mazar e-Sharif.

On Jan. 17, International Red Cross officials made their first visit to detainees at Camp X-ray, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

On Jan. 28, 14 soldiers from the 101st Airborne Div. were injured when their CH-47 Chinook helicopter crashed near Khowst, Afghanistan. On the same day, five soldiers were injured in a forklift accident.

On Feb. 4, stop loss expanded to 38 specialties. Go to <http://perscomnd04.army.mil/milpermsgs.nsf/WebFrameset?OpenFrameSet> and click on 2002 Messages and then message number 02-096 for a complete list.

On Feb. 13, a soldier from 7th Transportation Battalion at Fort Bragg, N.C., was killed at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, after a piece of heavy equipment fell on him.

### Alexandria, Va.

## Recreation Sites Upgraded

THE Army is adding more rooms to its "Shades of Green" hotel at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida and building a brand new hotel in the heart of Bavaria.

The \$132 million projects — approved by Congress and

the Defense Department — won't cost taxpayers a dime. Construction will be funded through a commercial loan, which will be repaid by nonappropriated funds generated by the four Armed Forces Recreation Centers.

The new 330-room hotel in Garmisch, an hour south of Munich, Germany, at the foot of the Bavarian Alps, will replace four older hotels currently oper-

ating in Chiemsee and Garmisch.

"It's cheaper to build a new hotel than to renovate the existing properties," said Peter F. Isaacs, chief operating officer of the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center in Alexandria, Va.

Rooms in the new hotel will be twice the size of existing rooms, comfortably accommodating four people and all their summer or winter recreational gear.

Hotel amenities will include a swimming pool, spa facilities, conference and meeting rooms, and a restaurant and lounge, all scheduled to open in 2004.

In Orlando, Fla., the Army is adding 299 guest rooms to Shades of Green at Walt Disney World Resort. The Army leased the 287-room Disney Inn in 1993 and bought it in 1996.

During the 18 months of construction, to begin in April, the hotel will close. Isaacs said trying to keep the hotel open during expansion would have a negative impact on guests and would make physical security too difficult to maintain.

"By closing the hotel completely, we'll reduce construc-

tion time by six months and the cost of the project by \$6 million," said Isaacs. Plans call for the newly expanded hotel to reopen in September 2003.

While the hotel is closed, military members can still visit the area and stay in affordable hotels.

"Travelers can still make their reservations online at the Shades of Green website," said Isaacs.

Room rates at recommended hotels will be the same as they were for Shades of Green, but guests will have to pay state and local taxes during this period.

Customers will be informed about the taxes when they make their reservations.

Shades of Green employees will continue to operate the reservation system and the attraction ticket-sales office. — CFSC Public Affairs Office

### Washington, D.C.

## OMPF Online Expands to Meet Growth

CAPTAINS and staff sergeants who are being considered for promotion this spring and sum-



Shades of Green in Florida will close during the 18-month renovation, but other affordable hotels will be available.

mer can review their Official Military Personnel Files online.

OMPF Online, which kicked off in November for sergeants first class being considered for promotion, is expanding to more of the force.

In the past three months, OMPF Online has already proved to be a cost-saving initiative for the Army, said COL Howard Olsen, the Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center commander.

"About 10 percent of the 20,000 sergeants first class who reviewed their records online didn't request microfiche copies," Olsen said. "It costs about \$1.40 to produce a microfiche,

so just multiply that by 2,000."

EREC's goal is to eliminate soldiers' need for microfiche copies of their records by fiscal year 2003. This will save the Army an enormous amount of money annually, Olsen said.

Another EREC goal is for the entire Army to be able to view military records online by June, Olsen said. This month, new software for the complimentary feature "Field to File" is scheduled to be tested.

It will enable soldiers to send official military personnel documents, such as awards and Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Reports, directly from a battalion or brigade S-1



Steve Harding

**The production version of the Army's Interim Armored Vehicle will be named "Stryker" to honor two MOH recipients.**

to the soldiers' OMPF at PERSCOM. — *Army News Service*

#### **Fort Lauderdale, Fla.**

### **IAV Named for MOH Recipients**

THE Army named the Interim Armored Vehicle the "Stryker," honoring two men who earned the Medal of Honor: PFC Stuart S. Stryker, who served in World War II, and SPC Robert F. Stryker, who served in Vietnam.

The Stryker, the wheeled armored combat vehicle for the Army's Interim Brigade Combat Teams, combines firepower, battlefield mobility, survivability and versatility with reduced logistics requirements.

"This is a tremendous combat vehicle, and it is appropriate that we name it after two great soldiers who gave their last full measure of devotion on the battlefield in defense of our nation," said SMA Jack L. Tilley.

SPC Stryker, who served with the 1st Infantry Division, was posthumously awarded the MOH for saving the life of his fellow soldiers near Loc Ninh, Vietnam. PFC Stryker, who served with the 513th Para-

chute Infantry, posthumously received the MOH for leading an attack near Wesel, Germany, that resulted in the capture of 200 enemy soldiers and freed three American pilots.

"These two great soldiers were separated by a generation and fought on battlefields on opposite sides of the globe, but both made the ultimate sacrifice for their country and their fellow soldiers," said Tilley. "Now it's up to all soldiers to honor the Stryker name by making full use of the vehicle's enormous capabilities."

The Army will field six IBCTs with more than 300 Strykers in each. The first two IBCTs are 3rd Brigade, 2nd Inf. Div. and the 1st Bde., 25th Inf. Div., both at Fort Lewis, Wash. These two brigades are expected to be equipped and ready for deployment during fiscal years 2003 and 2004, respectively.

The next brigades to transform will be the 172nd Inf. Bde. at Fort Richardson, Alaska; the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Polk, La.; the 2nd Bde., 25th Inf. Div., at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and the 56th Bde. of the 28th Inf. Div., Pennsylvania National Guard. — *Army Public Affairs*

## **Tax News**

### **DOD Says: Disregard IRS Mistake**

AS many as 60,000 service members who served in combat zones over the past several years recently got letters from the IRS indicating they may lose their tax exclusions for that combat-zone duty. But the Department of Defense said soldiers shouldn't worry about it.

The IRS letters set a deadline for service members to provide the IRS with the dates they entered and left a designated combat zone and the name of the zone in which they served in order to get the tax exemption.

The letters stated: "If you don't answer this letter, we will update your account to show no combat-zone service."

LTC Tom Emswiler, executive director of the Armed Forces Tax Council, said the IRS never intended to take away anyone's eligibility for tax exemption.

Apparently, an IRS service center sent the letters without coordinating with IRS headquarters, DOD officials said.

Emswiler said the IRS is trying to update its records, but made a mistake in the letter's wording. He said service members who haven't replied to the letters can disregard them. At press time, the IRS plans to mail a second letter explaining the error.

Emswiler said DOD has a good working relationship with the IRS and had no problem getting this matter resolved. "The IRS doesn't want to take adverse action against any service member," he said. "The letter was unfortunate all around, but the IRS is doing everything it can to correct the problem." — *American Forces Press Service*

JO1 Preston Keres, USN



**SPC Jill Bakken (right) and Vonetta Flowers prepare to board the bobsled that carried them to the gold medal.**

## Salt Lake City, Utah

### Soldiers Win Gold, Silver, Bronze at Olympics

A UTAH National Guard soldier steered her two-seat bobsled to a gold medal in the first women's bobsled competition featured in the Olympic Games.

SPC Jill Bakken, a member of the Army World Class Athlete Program, and civilian brakemaster Vonetta Flowers drove into the pages of Olympic history.

Bakken is the first WCAP member to win Olympic gold, according to Army officials.

Army Reservist 1LT Garrett Hines, from Atlanta, was the brakeman on the bright red "USA-1" sled that Todd Hays drove to a silver-medal finish on the four-man event's second day.

The four soldiers, in a landmark day for Army athletics, helped the United States claim its first Olympic men's bobsled medals since 1956 — when a U.S. team earned the bronze at Cortina, Italy.

WCAP members SPC Doug Sharp of the Oregon National Guard and SPC Mike Kohn of the Virginia National Guard, joined by SGT Dan Steel and five-time Olympian Brian

Shimer, took the bronze in the four-man bobsled event.

WCAP soldiers also competed in the biathlon. Army SPC Jeremy Teela — the most successful U.S. Olympic military biathlete — placed 14th in the grueling men's 20-kilometer course, 20th in the 10-kilometer sprint and 23rd in the 12.5-kilometer pursuit race.

SGT Kristina Sabas-teanski, SPC Andrea Nahrgang and SPC Kara Salmela were on the U.S. women's four-member

biathlon relay team, which finished 15th. — *National Guard Bureau PAO*

## Washington, D.C.

### Travel and Moves to Be Less Costly

SEVERAL changes in the 2002 National Defense Authorization Act are making moves and official travel less costly for military members.

Changes dealing with dis-

## Veterans News

### Veterans Targeted For Identity Theft

AN e-mail circulating about a retiree who had his identity stolen after filing separation papers at a county courthouse is no urban legend, according to Transition Center officials at the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command.

Soldiers separating from the military are now being advised to ignore the old recommendation to file their Department of Defense Form 214 (military discharge) with their local county courthouses. Instead, transition counselors advise soldiers to safeguard their personal information to guard against credit fraud, said Deborah Snider, Transition Center personnel analyst.

Identity theft is the fastest-growing crime, according to the Federal Trade Commission, and many victims don't find out that their personal information has been stolen until they try to buy a house or get a loan.

In one case, a lawyer who'd stolen a Navy retiree's identity was found to have a laptop with several thousand military names, Social Security numbers and other information on it. The common link between the veterans on the list was that they had filed their DD 214s with their county courthouses.

When soldiers separate from active duty, Snider said, the most vital document they receive is the DD 214. The document contains their Social Security numbers and birth dates. In the past, soldiers were advised to file the form with their local courthouse to ensure that they would always be able to get a certified copy. A certified copy is required in order to receive any Department of Veterans Affairs benefits.

Once the DD 214 is filed, however, it becomes a public record. Some courthouses have put this information online, and even more plan to do so in the future, Snider said.

"Our recommendation is to safeguard the form as you would any vital official paper," Snider said. "A safe-deposit box would be a good investment." — *ARNEWS*



location allowance, temporary lodging expenses, pet quarantines and frequent-flier miles are all designed to reduce out-of-pocket expenses.

Dislocation allowances, paid when married soldiers are forced to move, are being improved in several ways. Previously, the allowance was paid only when a soldier PCSed. Under the new law, soldiers receive a partial dislocation allowance of \$500 if they're moved involuntarily from gov-

ernment quarters at the government's convenience. The full allowance is generally equivalent to one month's basic allowance for housing.

Another change allows dual-service couples (with no other family members) who are moving into government quarters to get the dislocation allowance, said Stephen Westbrook, director of DOD's Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee.

The previous rules treated

dual-service couples as two separate, single members — and single members are not entitled to the allowance.

A third change allows soldiers to claim the dislocation allowance for moves to their first duty stations. They previously were ineligible. Separation and retirement moves remain ineligible, Westbrook said.

Temporary Lodging Expense payments are designed to cover costs associated with staying in a hotel or other temporary quarters while moving from one duty station to another. The new law increases the daily payment maximum rate from \$110 to \$180, Westbrook said.

The 2002 act doubles the reimbursement rate for pet-quarantine costs when soldiers move to areas that require quarantine.

The new authorization act

also allows soldiers moving from one duty station within the United States to another to ship a second vehicle to their new duty stations.

Westbrook said the government previously reimbursed only a certain amount of the cost a soldier incurred for driving a second car. The new law will pay shipping costs for a second car up to the amount it would have cost to drive the vehicle, he said.

The new law also allows federal workers and service members to keep frequent-flier miles and other promotional benefits airlines offer travelers.

A DOD General Counsel discussion of the frequent-flier policy change and implications is accessible on the Web from the contents page at [www.defenselink.mil/dodgc/defense\\_ethics/index.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/dodgc/defense_ethics/index.html). — AFPS

## Awards Update

### DOD Decides Not to Create Cold War Medal

THE Defense Department announced it will not create a Cold War service medal, and Army officials said any commemorative medals made by private vendors are not authorized for wear on the military uniform.

"Throughout the Cold War years, commanders used a full spectrum of individual, unit and service awards to recognize the achievements and sacrifices of service members," said Brad Loo, deputy director of Officer and Enlisted Management Personnel for the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

The Cold War refers to the period from the 1945 end of World War II until the 1991 disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Former Secretary of Defense William Cohen approved a Cold War Certificate. The certificate recognizes all service members and federal employees who faithfully served in the U.S. military during the Cold War era, Loo said.

Last year an unidentified source caused confusion by sending an e-mail to individuals informing them that a Cold War medal had been approved, and attached a picture of the medal to the e-mail, said Arlette King, chief of policy for the Army Awards Branch.

There are several different designs of medals being offered on the Internet and even at military clothing sales stores.

It is against the law to wear an unauthorized medal on the military uniform, said MSG Kittie Messman, the uniform policy noncommissioned officer for the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel.

"Whoever knowingly wears a medal not authorized by Congress ... shall be fined or imprisoned not more than six months, or both," Messman said, "according to Title 18, Section 704, Military Medal or Decorations." — ARNEWS



SSG Gary L. Kleffer

**New policies will make moving easier and less costly for service members and their families.**